

SECTION III – ATTORNEYS

Rule AT-1. Admission of Attorneys.

(a) Eligibility for Admission.

- (1) In General. An attorney may be admitted to the bar of the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas if the attorney is licensed to practice by the highest court of a state, is in good standing in that bar; and has good personal and professional character. An applicant who is not licensed to practice by the highest court of any state may apply for admission, however, if admitted, such an attorney must obtain a license from the highest court of any state within one year after being admitted to the bar of this Court.
- (2) Bankruptcy Court. An attorney seeking to practice before the Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Texas must make application to the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas as this rule requires.

(b) Application for Admission.

- (1) Contents. An application for admission must be made on the form prescribed by the court. It must be supported by a certificate of good standing (or equivalent documentation) from the highest state court and the United States district court, if licensed, where the applicant practices. All certificates of good standing must be dated no earlier than 60 days before the date the application is filed. The application must also be supported by two letters of recommendation in the form prescribed by the court. For an applicant residing in this district, the letters must be from attorneys admitted to practice and in good standing in the bar of this court. For an applicant practicing in another federal judicial district, the letters must be from attorneys admitted to practice and in good standing in the bar of that court. The letters must be written and dated no earlier than 6 months before the date the application is filed.
- (2) Seminar Requirement. Within one year before the application is filed, the applicant must complete a live, video or on-line continuing legal education program on federal court practice approved by the court, and must certify that attendance on a form prescribed by the court. This requirement does not apply to a nonresident applicant who is admitted to practice and in good standing in the bar of another U.S. district court. In the event that the applicant was previously admitted to this Court and previously fulfilled the CLE requirement, this requirement is waived.
- (3) Filing. An applicant residing in this district must file the application with the clerk in the division where he or she resides. An applicant residing outside this district may file the application in any division of the district.

- (4) Time for Completing Application. An applicant must complete all requirements for admission (including any requested supplemental or explanatory information) within one year after filing an application. If the applicant fails to do so, the application expires. In that event, an applicant who seeks admission again must file a new application.
- (c) Divisional Committee on Admissions. In each division of this court there is constituted a committee on admissions, which reviews applications for admission to the bar of this court and makes appropriate recommendations to the court.
 - (1) Composition. Each committee on admissions has five or more members, including a chair. To the extent possible, the committee should include civil, criminal, and bankruptcy practitioners. Those eligible for service on the committee are attorneys licensed to practice in this district and in good standing, and maintaining a law office in the division served. The members and chair are appointed by the judges resident in, or responsible for, the division.
 - (2) Terms. Membership terms should be staggered so that approximately one third of the members' terms expire each year. The term is 3 years, unless a shorter period is required to achieve staggered terms. The terms of members and the chair may be renewed one or more times.
 - (3) Quorum. A quorum of a committee consists of three members, participating either in person or by electronic means.
- (d) Action on Applications.
 - (1) Clerk's Duties. The clerk will inspect applications for completeness, and may request the applicant to provide supplemental or explanatory information. The clerk will forward completed applications to the committee chair.
 - (2) Examination by the Committee. The committee will meet with reasonable frequency to examine applications referred to it. The committee may request the applicant to provide supplemental or explanatory information, and may request that the applicant appear before it. If the committee determines that an applicant meets all requirements for admission, it will report that recommendation to the judge or judges of the division. If the committee does not recommend an applicant for admission, the chair of the Divisional Committee will promptly inform the applicant.
 - (3) Review by the Court. An applicant who is not recommended for admission may request that the court review the application. A request for review must be made

in writing within 30 days of receipt of the committee's notification, addressed to the judge or judges of the division, with a copy to the committee chair. Upon receipt of a request for court review, the chair will send the committee's file on the applicant to the court.

(e) Procedure for Admission.

- (1) In General. After approval by the committee, and upon motion of a member of the bar of this court made in open court, an attorney may be admitted to practice. To complete admission, the attorney must pay the prescribed admission fee, and must take in open court the following oath or affirmation:

"I do solemnly [swear or affirm] that I will discharge the duties of attorney and counselor of this court faithfully, that I will demean myself uprightly under the law and the highest ethics of our profession, and that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States."

- (2) Special Procedure for Non-Resident Attorney. A non-resident attorney who has completed all other requirements for admission may, with the approval of a judge of the division where the application was filed, have the oath or affirmation of admission administered by a judge in another federal judicial district. When the attorney files the oath or affirmation with the clerk and pays the prescribed admission fee, the attorney will be admitted to practice in this district.

(f) Appearance Pro Hac Vice.

- (1) In General. An attorney who is licensed by the highest court of a state or another federal district court, but who is not admitted to practice before this court, may represent a party in this court pro hac vice only by permission of the judge presiding. Unless excused by the judge presiding, an attorney is ordinarily required to apply for admission to the bar of this court.
- (2) Procedure. An attorney seeking admission pro hac vice must make application on a form prescribed by the court, and must pay the prescribed fee to the clerk. An attorney admitted pro hac vice must read and comply with the Local Court Rules for the Western District of Texas. By appearing in any case, an attorney becomes subject to the rules of this court.
- (3) Bankruptcy Court. Admission to practice pro hac vice before the district's bankruptcy court rests in the sole discretion of the bankruptcy judge to whom the motion is addressed. Such admission is limited to the particular case or matter for which it is approved; it is not a general admission to practice before the bankruptcy court or the district court.

- (g) Special Procedures for an Attorney Employed by a Governmental Entity. An application for admission by an attorney employed by the U.S. Department of Justice, the Attorney General of Texas, the Federal Public Defender for the district, or other governmental entity must be made on the form prescribed by the court, and supported with the required certificate of good standing. In lieu of submitting two letters of recommendation, an attorney covered by this subdivision need only submit a letter of recommendation from his or her supervising attorney. In addition, such an attorney is exempt while so employed from payment of any fee for admission, pro hac vice appearance, or membership renewal.
- (h) Renewal of Membership. A member of the bar of this court must renew the membership every 3 years after admission by paying the prescribed renewal fee to the clerk. If the renewal fee is not timely paid, the attorney will be removed from the rolls of the court. An attorney so removed who wishes to practice in this court must reapply for admission.

Rule AT-2. Local Counsel.

A judge presiding has discretion to require, upon notice, that an attorney who resides outside the district designate as local counsel an attorney who is licensed in this court and maintains a law office in this district. Local counsel must have authority to act as attorney of record for all purposes, and must be prepared to present and argue the party's position at any hearing or status conference called.

Rule AT-3. Withdrawal of Attorney.

An attorney seeking to withdraw from a case must file a motion specifying the reasons for withdrawal and providing the name and office address of the successor attorney. If the successor attorney is not known, the motion must set forth the client's name, address, and telephone number, and must bear either the client's signature or a detailed explanation why the client's signature could not be obtained after due diligence.

Rule AT-4. Standards for Pretrial Conduct.

- (a) **Obligation to Cooperate.** Before noticing or scheduling a deposition, hearing, or other pretrial event, a lawyer should consult and work with opposing counsel to accommodate the needs and reasonable requests of all witnesses and participating lawyers. In scheduling a pretrial event, lawyers should strive to agree upon a mutually convenient time and place, seeking to minimize travel expense and to allow adequate time for preparation. If a lawyer needs to reschedule a deposition or other pretrial event, the lawyer should give prompt notice to all other counsel, explaining the conflict or other compelling reason for rescheduling.
- (b) **Requests for Extensions of Time.** The court expects a lawyer to grant other lawyers' requests for reasonable extensions of time to respond to discovery, pretrial motions, and other pretrial matters. Opposing such requests wastes resources, unless the client's legitimate interests will be adversely affected.
- (c) **Written Submissions.** Briefs and memoranda should not refer to or rely on facts that are not properly of record. A lawyer may, however, present historical, economic, or sociological data if the applicable rules of evidence support the data's admissibility. Neither written submissions nor oral presentations should disparage the integrity, intelligence, morals, ethics, or personal behavior of an adversary unless such matters are directly relevant under the controlling substantive law.
- (d) **Communication with Adversaries.** A lawyer's role is to zealously advance the legitimate interests of the client, while maintaining appropriate standards of civility and decorum. In dealing with others, a lawyer should not reflect any ill feelings that the client may have toward the adversary. A lawyer should treat all other lawyers, all parties, and all witnesses courteously, not only in court, but also in other written and oral communication. A lawyer should refrain from acting upon or manifesting bias or prejudice toward any person involved in the litigation.
- (e) **Discovery.** A lawyer should conduct discovery to elicit relevant facts and evidence, and not for an improper purpose, such as to harass, intimidate, or unduly burden another party or a witness. When a discovery dispute arises, opposing lawyers should attempt to resolve it by working cooperatively together. A lawyer should refrain from filing motions to compel or for sanctions unless all reasonable efforts to resolve the dispute with opposing counsel have been exhausted.
- (f) **Motion Practice.** Before filing a non-dispositive motion, a lawyer should make a reasonable effort to resolve the issue without involving the court. A lawyer who has no valid objection to an opponent's proposed motion should promptly make this position known to opposing counsel. If, after opposing a motion, a lawyer determines that the opposition was mistaken, then the lawyer should promptly so advise opposing counsel.

and the court.

(g) Settlement and Alternative Dispute Resolution.

- (1) A lawyer should educate the client early in the legal process about various methods of resolving disputes without trial, including mediation and neutral case evaluation. A lawyer should advise the client of the benefits of settlement, including savings to the client, greater control over the process and the result, and a more expeditious resolution of the dispute. At the earliest practicable time, a lawyer should provide the client with a realistic assessment of the potential outcome of the case so that the client may effectively assess various approaches to resolving the dispute. As new information is obtained during the pretrial phase, the lawyer should revise the assessment as necessary. When enough is known about the case to make settlement negotiations meaningful, a lawyer should explore settlement with the client and with opposing counsel.
 - (2) A lawyer must promptly inform the court of any settlement, whether partial or entire, with any party, or the discontinuance of any issue.
- (h) Stipulations; Expediting Trial. In civil cases, a lawyer should stipulate in advance with opposing counsel to all non-controverted facts; give opposing counsel, on reasonable request, an opportunity to inspect, in advance, all non-impeaching evidence as the law permits; and, in general, take reasonable steps to avoid delays and to expedite the trial.

RULE AT-5. Standards for Conduct Before the Judge and Jury

The dignity, decorum and courtesy that traditionally characterize the courts of civilized nations are not empty formalities. They are essential to a courtroom atmosphere in which justice can be achieved. Accordingly, this court requires the following:

- (a) A lawyer must be punctual in making all court appearances and fulfilling all professional commitments. In case of tardiness or absence from a court appearance, a lawyer should promptly notify the court and opposing counsel.
- (b) An attorney must be attired in a proper and dignified manner, and should abstain from any apparel or ornament calculated to attract attention. A lawyer should refrain from assuming an undignified posture.
- (c) A lawyer must display a courteous, dignified and respectful attitude toward the judge presiding, not for the sake of the judge's person, but to show respect for and confidence in the judicial office. A lawyer must rise when addressing, or being addressed by, the judge.
- (d) A lawyer must never be unfair or abusive or inconsiderate to adverse witnesses or opposing litigants, or ask any question not intended to legitimately impeach but only to insult or degrade the witness.
- (e) A lawyer must avoid disparaging personal remarks or acrimony toward opposing counsel.
- (f) A lawyer must advise the client, witnesses, and spectators of the behavior and decorum required in the courtroom, and take all reasonable steps to prevent disorder or disruption of court proceedings.
- (g) A lawyer must disclose to the judge and opposing counsel any information of which the lawyer is aware that a juror or a prospective juror has or may have any interest, direct or indirect, in the outcome of the case, or is acquainted or connected in any manner with any lawyer in the case or any partner or associate or employee of the lawyer, or with any litigant, or with any person who has appeared or is expected to appear as a witness, unless the judge and opposing counsel have previously been made aware of that fact by voir dire examination or otherwise.
- (h) During the trial of a case a lawyer connected with the case must not communicate with or cause another to communicate with any member of the jury, and a lawyer who is not connected with the case must not communicate with or cause another to communicate with a juror concerning the case.

- (i) A lawyer should avoid, as much as possible, approaching the bench. A lawyer should anticipate questions that may arise during the trial, and take them up with the court and opposing counsel in a pretrial hearing. If, however, it becomes necessary for an attorney to confer with the court at the bench, leave of court should be requested.
- (j) A lawyer must question witnesses and deliver jury arguments from the lectern, which may be moved to face the jury. If it becomes necessary to question or argue from another location, leave of court should be requested.
- (k) A lawyer must hand all papers intended for the court to see to the courtroom deputy clerk, who will pass them up to the judge. Hand to the clerk, rather than the court reporter, any exhibits to be marked which have not previously been identified; and give the clerk, as soon as convenient before the trial, a list of witnesses showing the probable order in which they will be called.
- (l) Photographing, broadcasting or televising any judicial proceeding or any person directly or indirectly involved in a proceeding, whether court is in session or not, in or from any part of a United States Courthouse, is prohibited, except with the permission of the judge presiding.
- (m) Audio recorders, audio- or video-recording cell phones, or other means of recording the proceedings must not be brought into a courtroom, except with the permission of the judge presiding. This rule does not apply to such recorders or other devices used by, and under the direction and control of, a judicial officer or the official court reporter.
- (n) Cell phones, pagers, e-mail devices, and music players must be turned off while inside a courtroom.
- (o) The following are prohibited in a courtroom:
 - (1) using tobacco in any form;
 - (2) consuming or possessing beverages or edibles (except as permitted by the judge presiding);
 - (3) chewing gum while court is in session;
 - (4) unnecessary talking or other unnecessary noises while court is in session.

Rule AT-6. Publicity and Trial Management.

- (a) In General. A lawyer should try a case in court and not in the news media. A lawyer must not make an extrajudicial statement that a reasonable person would expect to be disseminated by means of public communication if the lawyer knows or reasonably should know that the statement has a substantial likelihood of materially prejudicing an adjudicative proceeding.
- (b) Criminal Investigation. With respect to a grand jury or other pending investigation of a criminal matter, a lawyer participating in the investigation must refrain from making any extrajudicial statement, for dissemination by any means of public communication, that goes beyond the public record or that is not necessary to inform the public that the investigation is underway, to describe the general scope of the investigation, to warn the public of any dangers, to obtain assistance in the apprehension of a suspect, or to otherwise aid in the investigation.
- (c) Criminal Prosecution. From time of arrest, issuance of an arrest warrant, or filing of a complaint, information, or indictment in any criminal matter until the commencement of trial or disposition without trial, a lawyer associated with the prosecution or defense must not release or authorize the release of any extrajudicial statement, for dissemination by any means of public communication, related to that matter and concerning:
 - (1) the prior criminal record (including arrests and criminal charges), or the character or reputation of the accused, except that the lawyer may make a factual statement of the accused's name, age, residence, occupation, and family status, and if the accused has not been apprehended, a lawyer associated with the prosecution may release any information necessary to aid in his apprehension or to warn the public of dangers he may present;
 - (2) the existence or contents of any confession, admission, or statement given by the accused, or the refusal or failure of the accused to make any statement;
 - (3) the performance of any examinations or tests or the accused's refusal or failure to submit to an examination or test;
 - (4) the identity, testimony, or credibility of prospective witnesses, except that the lawyer may announce the identity of the victim if the announcement is not otherwise prohibited by law;
 - (5) the possibility of a plea of guilty to the offense charged or a lesser offense; or
 - (6) any opinion as to the accused's guilt or innocence or as to the merits of the case or the evidence in the case.

- (d) Criminal Trial. During the trial of any criminal matter, including jury selection, a lawyer associated with the prosecution or defense must not give or authorize any extrajudicial statement or interview, relating to the trial or the parties or issues in the trial, for dissemination by any means of public communication, except that the lawyer may quote from or refer without comment to public records filed in the case.
- (e) Sentencing Phase. After guilt is found in a criminal case and before sentence is imposed, a lawyer associated with the prosecution or defense must not make or authorize any extrajudicial statement for dissemination by any means of public communication if there is a reasonable likelihood that the statement will affect the sentence.
- (f) Permitted Statements in Criminal Matters. This rule does not preclude the lawyer, in the proper discharge of his or her official or professional duty, from:
 - (1) announcing the fact and circumstances of arrest (including time and place of arrest, resistance, pursuit, and use of weapons), the identity of the investigating and arresting officer or agency, and the length of the investigation;
 - (2) making an announcement, at the time of seizure of any physical evidence other than a confession, admission or statement, limited to a description of the evidence seized;
 - (3) disclosing the nature, substance, or text of the charge, including a brief description of the offense charged;
 - (4) quoting or referring without comment to public records of the court in the case;
 - (5) announcing the scheduling or result of any stage in the judicial process;
 - (6) requesting assistance in obtaining evidence; or
 - (7) announcing without elaboration that the accused denies the charges made against him.
- (g) Special Orders. In a widely publicized or sensational case, the court on motion of either party or its own motion, may issue a special order governing extrajudicial statements by participants likely to interfere with the rights of the accused to a fair trial by an impartial jury, the courtroom seating and conduct of spectators and news media representatives, the management and sequestration of jurors and witnesses, and any other matters the court may deem appropriate. The order might address some or all of the following subjects, among others:
 - (1) a proscription of extrajudicial statements by participants in the trial, including

lawyers, parties, witnesses, jurors, and court officials, which have a substantial likelihood of divulging prejudicial matter not of public record in the case;

- (2) specific directives regarding the clearing of courthouse entrances and hallways and the management of the jury and witnesses during the course of the trial to avoid their mingling with or being in proximity of reporters, photographers, parties, lawyers, and others, both in entering and leaving the courtroom and courthouse, and during recesses in the trial;
- (3) a specific directive that the jurors refrain from reading, listening to, or watching news reports concerning the case, and that they similarly refrain from discussing the case with anyone during the trial and from communicating with others in any manner during their deliberations;
- (4) sequestration of the jury on motion of either party or on the court's own, without disclosing any movant's identity;
- (5) a directive that the names and addresses of jurors or prospective jurors not be publicly released except as required by statute, and that no photograph be taken or sketch made of any juror within the environs of the court;
- (6) insulation of witnesses from news interviews during the trial period;
- (7) specific directives regarding the seating of spectators and representatives of the news media.

Rule AT-7. Discipline of Attorneys.

- (a) Standards of Professional Conduct. Members of the bar of this court and any attorney permitted to practice before this court must comply with the standards of professional conduct set out in the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct, Tex. Gov't Code, tit. 2, subtit. G, App. A, art. X, sec. 9 (Vernon) which are hereby adopted as the standards of professional conduct of this court. This specification is not exhaustive of the standards of professional conduct. For matters not covered by the Texas rules, the American Bar Association's Model Rules of Professional Conduct should be consulted.
- (b) District Disciplinary Committee. There is constituted a District Disciplinary Committee, which assists the district court and the bankruptcy court in investigating complaints about the qualification, conduct, and performance of members of their bar.
 - (1) Composition. The committee has 15 members. Those eligible for service on the committee are attorneys licensed to practice in this district and in good standing, and residing within the district. The committee should include civil, criminal, and bankruptcy practitioners. Five members must be residents of the Austin and Waco Divisions, five members must be residents of the San Antonio and Del Rio Divisions, and five members must be residents of the El Paso, Midland-Odessa and Pecos Divisions. The members are appointed by the active judges resident in, or responsible for, those divisions. The chair and vice-chair are designated by the chief judge of the district.
 - (2) Terms. Membership terms should be staggered so that one third of the members' terms expire each year. The term is 3 years, unless a shorter period is required to achieve staggered terms. The terms of members and the chair may be renewed one or more times.
- (c) Grounds for Referral to the District Disciplinary Committee. An attorney may be referred by any Magistrate Judge, Bankruptcy Judge or District Judge to the District Disciplinary Committee for appropriate review, investigation, and recommendation if there is reason to believe that the attorney:
 - (1) has been convicted of a felony offense or a crime involving dishonesty or false statement in any state or federal court;
 - (2) had his or her license to practice law in any jurisdiction suspended, revoked, or otherwise limited by any appropriate disciplinary authority;
 - (3) resigned his or her license to practice law in any state or any federal court;
 - (4) has engaged in conduct that violates the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional

Conduct;

- (5) fails to comply with any rule or order issued by a judge of this court;
 - (6) presents an impediment to the orderly administration of justice or the integrity of the court; or
 - (7) represents a client in such a manner as to raise a serious question concerning the quality of the attorney's professional performance.
- (d) **Discipline Imposed by a Judge Presiding.** Notwithstanding any other provision of these rules, any judge, including a bankruptcy judge or a magistrate judge, has inherent authority to discipline an attorney who appears before him or her. However, any judge contemplating disbaring an attorney or preventing an attorney from practicing district-wide will refer the attorney to the District Disciplinary Committee. If a judge believes emergency circumstances exist that require the immediate suspension of an attorney, that judge may request that all active district judges immediately consider the matter. Upon a majority vote of the active district judges, an attorney may immediately be suspended from practicing in the district pending a report and recommendation from the District Disciplinary Committee. If a bankruptcy judge believes emergency circumstances exist that requires the immediate suspension of an attorney, that bankruptcy judge may request that all active district and bankruptcy judges immediately consider the matter. Upon a majority vote of the active district and bankruptcy judges, an attorney may immediately be suspended from practicing in the district pending a report and recommendation from the District Disciplinary Committee.
- (e) **Self-Reporting by Attorneys.** A member of the bar of this court must promptly report in writing to the clerk, with full details and copies of pertinent documents, if any of the following occur:
- (1) the attorney is convicted of a felony or a crime involving dishonesty or false statement;
 - (2) the attorney loses or relinquishes, temporarily or permanently, the right to practice in any court of record (other than voluntarily relinquishment, not under any disciplinary order or threat of discipline); or
 - (3) the attorney is disciplined, publicly or privately, by any bar, court, court agency, or court committee.
- (f) **Procedure upon a Referral.**

- (1) Notice. Promptly upon receipt of a referral, the chair of the District Disciplinary Committee must inform the subject attorney in writing of the nature of the referral and the attorney's obligations under this rule.
- (2) Answer. Within 10 days after receiving notice of a referral under this rule, the attorney must respond in writing to the committee chair. The respondent attorney must admit or deny each claim asserted, and state concisely any defense to a claim.
- (3) Screening. The chair will assign the referral along with the respondent's response to a screening subcommittee. The subcommittee consists of one or more members of the full committee designated by the chair who reside in the same region as the referred attorney (e.g., Austin/Waco; San Antonio/Del Rio; West Texas). At least one member of the screening subcommittee must be an attorney who practices in the same area as the referred attorney (e.g., civil, criminal or bankruptcy). The subcommittee will conduct such preliminary inquiry it deems appropriate and may request the respondent to meet with it informally to provide an explanation. After this screening, if the subcommittee determines no further investigation is required and no discipline should be imposed, it will so inform the committee chair. The chair will then inform the chief judge and the respondent of the recommendation.
- (4) Assignment to a Panel. If the screening subcommittee determines that the matter may warrant disciplinary action, it will inform the committee chair. The chair will then designate a panel and assign the matter to it. The panel must include three or more members of the full committee who reside in the same region as the respondent (e.g., Austin/Waco; San Antonio/Del Rio; West Texas). At least one member of the panel must be an attorney who practices in the same area as the referred attorney (e.g. civil, criminal or bankruptcy). Members of the initial screening subcommittee may serve as members of the panel. The chair will notify the respondent in writing of this assignment and what matters will be investigated.
- (5) Investigation. No earlier than 10 days after notice to the respondent of the assignment, the panel will conduct such investigation it deems appropriate including questioning witnesses and holding a hearing with the respondent present. Full cooperation with any committee investigation is an obligation of any member of the bar of this court.
- (6) Panel Report and Recommendation. After investigation the panel will render a report and recommendation as to whether the respondent committed any violation and what disciplinary action, if any, should be imposed. Absent good cause shown by the chair of the District Disciplinary Committee, the court expects that a report and recommendation will be completed within 6 months after the referral. The chair will send the complete report and recommendation to the chief judge

and a summary of the report and recommendation to the respondent.

- (7) **Objections to Report and Recommendation.** Within 10 days after receipt of the summary report and recommendation, the respondent may submit objections to it, seek revisions, and suggest alternatives to the recommendation. The panel, after considering the response, may modify, amend, revoke, or adhere to its original recommendation and will so inform the committee chair. The chair will then send a copy of the final report and recommendation to the chief judge and a summary final report and recommendation to the respondent.
- (g) **Determination by a District Judge.** Within 5 days after receipt of the summary final report and recommendation, the respondent may contest any recommendation by written submission to the chief judge. Whether contested or not, the chief judge will assign the matter to a district judge for determination. The judge may conduct a hearing, and may appoint any member of the court's bar to assist in the hearing. The judge's decision as to whether disciplinary action is warranted, and what sanction to impose, is a final ruling of the court.
- (h) **Confidentiality.** All papers pertaining to a matter referred to the committee must be kept confidential, except as otherwise provided above, unless the respondent requests in writing that the papers be opened to the public.
- (i) **Referral to Other Disciplinary Authority.** The chief judge may forward a copy of the committee's records and any court action regarding an attorney to the appropriate disciplinary authority of any bar or court that authorizes the attorney to practice law.

RULE AT-8. QUALIFIED LAW STUDENTS AND UNLICENSED LAW SCHOOL GRADUATES

- (a) A qualified law student or a qualified unlicensed law school graduate who has been certified under Texas Government Code § 81.102 and the Texas Supreme Court's "Rules and Regulation Governing the Participation of Qualified Law Students and Qualified Unlicensed Law School Graduates in the Trial of Cases in Texas" may be allowed to participate in hearings in this court, with the permission of the judge presiding, under the following terms:
 - (1) The student or unlicensed graduate must provide the Clerk's Office a copy (front and back) of his or her State Bar of Texas identification card. In so doing, the student or unlicensed graduate certifies that he or she has read and is familiar with the Western District of Texas Local Rules and will abide by them.
 - (2) The Clerk's Office must retain copies of the identification card on file.
 - (3) The supervising attorney named on the identification card and accompanying the student or unlicensed graduate in court must be a member in good standing of the bar of this court
- (b) If the student or unlicensed law graduate is appearing with an attorney employed by a governmental entity, the requirement for errors and omissions insurance is waived.
- (c) The scope of participation of a student or unlicensed graduate in any hearing rests within the discretion of the judge presiding.

RULE AT-9. CHANGE OF ADDRESS

An attorney who changes his or her office address, telephone number, facsimile number, or e-mail address must, within 30 days after the change, file with the clerk a notice of the change, along with any new information.